

Improving School Management Through Data-driven Leadership: The Key for Quality Education Services

There is a line that scientists and analytics say when using data from empirical evidences: Numbers don't lie.

Indeed, numbers support all the data needed to come up with feasible solutions to the emerging problems. This is the sole basis, of course aside from observations and experiences, that will help leaders to produce objective and unbiased decisions. Particularly, during these times of pandemic wherein data is highly important in deciding the new delivery modes of learning.

However, in light of the abrupt changes this COVID-19 pandemic brought, a brand of educational leadership emerges as one of the vanguards in facing the *new normal*. This is the data-driven leadership which is anchored on data and statistics as new profound way in innovating policies and decisions that will make this new chapter of learners' life. This calls for a transformational leadership.

What is a transformational leadership?

This is not a new concept. Hence, it is already proven approach in making new leaders by guiding the subordinates to become such. In a nutshell, the leaders are creating new leaders that will follow through their steps. This made a continuity of the projects and programs that certainly be successful in succeeding years.

Nonetheless, a transformational leader can inspire others to embrace change and help them see the strategy's vision, where it can take the business, and their role in getting there. Creating a strategic planning template for your organization can help you to track and measure your progress towards your goals (Michigan State University, 2021). Thus, a data-driven leadership can only be attained when a leader embraces numbers as data and transform this into information.

When transformational and data-driven leadership styles have been applied, this will truly make an impact in school management system. The subordinates will be properly guided and all are be given equal opportunities to take and lead certain roles within the school community. All of the teachers will be given chance to take micro and macro leadership roles in the programs or activities that will be given to them.

On the other hand, data can be attained through numbers gained using surveys and research. It can also be obtained through monitoring and evaluation of existing school policies and systems governing the new normal distance learning of learners. Aside from it, the feedback coming from the learners and parents are good data to delve with to improve the school leadership management. Moreover, data does not only focus to the quantitative or numerical value but also in qualitative aspects.

Nowadays, it is good to ponder how the modalities of distance learning affect the learning of the students. Also, what are the results of these modalities? Is there

need for remediation, innovation, or tutorial? Do schools need to conduct enrichment activities? What changes can be done to address learning gaps since face-to-face classes will be gradually brought back? These are just some questions that educators can think of and try to support their conclusion with the data that they have gathered. After all, in designing the learning delivery and school management, a data should support all the steps that should be implemented.

Furthermore, a data-driven leader always asks questions on what may come next so that back-up solution can be prepared. Contingency plans in case the main plan will not work will be made ready when needed. Data will provide the numbers that will ensure quality delivery and implementation of educational plans in the now normal.

Realizing that we have no control of the future events and also because of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the vital part of being a school leader is the ability to foresee the cause and effects of your plan for you to be able to craft an intervention when some education strategy may have a problem. The most effective approach...starts not with the data, but with identifying a business opportunity and determining how the model can improve performance (D. Barton, 2013).

Choose the right data by encouraging the involve personnel to have more comprehensive look at data by sourcing the data creatively and sorting out the problems and interventions to be used. While data are crucial, analytic models

that let the institution's leaders forecast and optimize results are what lead to performance improvements and competitive advantage.

Establishing the correct priorities to promote a data-driven culture should be led from the top down. Leaders should empower school personnel from different departments to confidently adapt in making a data-driven decision to serve as an investment in the institution's most important asset – the teaching and non-teaching personnel. Setting a decision-based on evidences will help the institution in long-term. Being data-driven is beyond statistics, numerical value, and other number-based tools. This means implementing a hypothesis-driven culture that identify and apply theories, test and rigorously seek to disprove them while immediately applying it (AI NEWS, 2021).

Numbers then turn to data and data will be information. Information then becomes the basis of actions that will turn into better results. In this now normal, education leaders need something to trust and lean on to. Aye, it's obviously numbers, isn't it? Numbers don't lie.